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General

Equatorial Guinea consists of **Isla de Bioko** (3°30'N., 8°41'E.), formerly known as Macias Nguema Biyogo or Fernando Poo; **Pagalu** (1°26'N., 5°37'E.), formerly known as Annobon; and an enclave on the mainland, formerly known as Rio Muni, which includes the adjacent islets of Corsico, Elobey Grande, and Elobey Chico. The mainland portion of the country is bounded on the N by Cameroon and on the E and S by Gabon.

Much volcanic activity exists on the various islands. In the cultivated areas of the islands, mosquitoes, phalaria flies, and tsetse flies are common up to a height of about 600m. Only sandflies and mosquitoes are encountered in the townships.

Isla de Bioko is the largest island in the Gulf of Guinea. It has two large volcanic formations separated by a valley that bisects the island at its narrowest point. The coast is high in the S part, while lower and more accessible in the N.

The climate is very hot and the island has a very heavy annual rainfall, especially in the S part. The period from April to October is the wettest, while the period from December to February is relatively dry. The warmest period is from January through May when the average temperature is 26°C. The

slightly cooler period is from July to October, when the mean annual temperature is 24°C. The island has recorded extreme temperatures of 16°C and 39°C.

Rio Muni has a coastal plain which gives way to a succession of valleys separated by low hills and spurs of the Crystal Mountains. The terrain is mostly made up of forest and woodland.

The climate is very hot and humid.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.

It was reported (1993) that many lights and navigation aids are unreliable.

Currency

The official unit of currency is the French African Community franc (franc CFA), consisting of 100 centimes.

Government

Equatorial Guinea, a former colony of Spain, became an independent republic in 1968. A Supreme Military Council ruled the country after a coup in 1979. In 1982, constitutional rule was resumed. The constitution provided for a President appointed with broad powers, who lead a Council of Ministers. The constitution also provided for an 11-member Council of State and a 41-member House of Representatives of the People.

In 1991, a referendum approved the institution of a multi-party democracy; this went into effect in 1992. The president is



Flag of Equatorial Guinea

directly elected for a 7-year term. The unicameral 80-member House of People’s Representatives is directly elected to a 5-year term.

The country is divided into seven provinces.
The legal system is based on Spanish civil law and tribal customs.
The capital is Malabo, on Isla de Bioko.

Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

New Year's Day	January 1
Good Friday	Varies
Labor Day	May 1
Independence Day	October 12
Human Rights Day	December 10
Christmas Day	December 25

Other holidays include Victory Day, Declaration of President Vitalicio S. E. Massie Nguema Biyogo Day, and Ascension of Equatorial Guinea's Life President Day.

Industries

Cocoa is the principal crop of Bioco. Mainland products include timber, coffee, coconuts, copra, palm oil, and bananas.

Languages

The official language is Spanish. Pidgin English and several local dialects are also spoken.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is ALFA (-1). Daylight Savings Time is not observed.

World Time Zone Chart
<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ref/pdf/802801.pdf>

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy in Equatorial Guinea closed in 1995. Diplomatic relations are handled through the U.S. Embassy in Cameroon.

The mailing addresses for the U.S. Embassy in Cameroon are, as follows:

- 1. International mail—
P.O. Box 817
Yaounde
- 2. Diplomatic pouch—
American Embassy Yaounde
Department of State
Washington DC 20521-2520

**U. S. Embassy Equatorial Guinea
Home Page**
<http://usembassy.state.gov/malabo>